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NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD

IC-77-4644

9 December 1977

77-10955

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, National Foreign Intelligence Board

VIA : Acting Vice Chairman, National Foreign Intelligence Board

21 DEC 1977

FROM : Walter Elder  
Executive Secretary

SUBJECT : National Foreign Intelligence Board

1. (C) Action Requested: That you consider these proposed changes in NFIB procedures so that you may be best served by NFIB in its advisory role.

2. (C) Background: The Presidential Directive of 4 August 1977 is crisp and precise in establishing your responsibilities and authority for national intelligence production, the national intelligence program and budget, and national intelligence collection tasking. NFIB is accorded an advisory role, specifically on production and program budgeting, and you have already set a new tone for NFIB in the development of the FY 1978 program budget and in the handling of national intelligence estimates, especially [redacted]. Your leadership has put the NFIB principals on notice that they have a new charter for their advisory function.

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At one end of the spectrum, the NFIB/DCI committee structure can be realigned to provide better disciplined and direct support to you and your principal community deputies. You have established these deputies to give a national focus to the activities of the Intelligence Community. We believe the NFIB role should also be focused on the following major clusters (which conform to the deputy structure):

1. Production of national intelligence - [redacted]

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2. National collection tasking - [redacted]

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3. Program management and evaluation -

4. "Such other matters as the DCI may choose".

There is no intent to set up an elaborate agenda structure to justify regular meetings. You have not and should not feel bound to any particular forum in seeking advice. However, NFIB has a continuity and vitality of its own, and the Community clings to this forum as its best outlet.

You and your Community (national) deputies should direct the NFIB meetings. Above and beyond the formal agenda items, the most valuable advice to you will come in Executive Sessions. Your guidance to them on such items as PRC advice, guidelines for the 1979 budget, evaluation of the Community's product and performance, and the protection of sources and methods, will ensure that the principals are on board early and not brought in at the last minute after all the staff work has been completed. The NFIB Principals will be most responsive to your leadership when they feel they are being informed and involved. With the direct support of your deputies, NFIB can be kept generally informed about the major cluster headings. For example, with the end of the FY 1978 budget cycle, the 1979 cycle begins. Your Deputy for Program Management and Evaluation can develop a schedule for the year which will show the NFIB when they should become involved and when formal NFIB advice is required. With the Principals aware and involved, the staff work can proceed and culminate in NFIB advice to you in a more timely and disciplined manner.

You should not seek NFIB advice on all facets of your role as the principal national intelligence advisor and manager. You cannot count on useful advice unless the Principals are asked within a context where they see their own interests affected. For example, when you have asked for advice on how to achieve your six objectives, on items to present to the President, and on how the SSCI is performing, they have not been responsive. On the other hand, when the budget was under development and when  was being reviewed, the NFIB recognized your direct involvement and an impact on their interests, and they have been responsive.

You should plan to keep NFIB informed in a way which does not lead them to proffer constant advice, some of which you will have to ignore. A case in point is  guidance to you and the Intelligence Community. NFIB has had a major role

25X1 in developing requirements and priorities in the past; they are not sure what their new role will be. NFIB has commented in past months on the substantive intelligence requirements list; the issue now rests with the [ ] Pending the issuance of formal guidance by you and the [ ] to the NFIB on this list, it is useful to keep NFIB informed without soliciting further advice. Guidance, when issued, will then come as less of a surprise.

For the immediate future, NFIB will be keenly interested in the following topics:

1. How to respond to forthcoming [ ] guidance,
2. The impact of the new national deputy structure,
3. The establishment of NITC, and
4. Guidance on the FY 1979 program and budget.

There are other longer-term subjects, which stem from an elaboration of your stated Community objectives, which may be appropriate for NFIB to consider. For example:

1. How to improve the quality of analysis,
2. A genuine Intelligence Community data base,
3. Protection of sources and methods,
4. Production needed over the next ten years,
5. Collection systems needed over the next ten years,
6. Relations with Congress and the public, and
7. Semi-annual evaluation by the [ ] for the NSC.

Few formal changes in NFIB procedures are required. The membership, except for national production, should remain flexible. For example, should evaluation become a matter calling for NFIB advice, elements such as State, Defense, and Treasury could elect to send senior consumers to appropriate Board meetings.

National Intelligence estimates will continue to come before the Board as the end results of production. The program and budget cycle renews itself annually. [ ] guidance will need careful attention under the aegis of your national deputies to ensure adequate translation into appropriate program, production and collection priorities.

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*Yes*  
The discipline of regularly scheduled meetings, every two weeks, if your schedule permits, will keep NFIB focused on its advisory role. The portion of the meeting reserved for consultation among you, your national deputies, and the NFIB Principals is more important than any formal agenda item. It is in restricted or executive sessions that the DCI can best vouchsafe his guidance and concerns; in turn, the principals,-- especially when forewarned--will be most forthcoming.

The Executive Secretary, in addition to managing the substantial flow of day-to-day action and information items, is prepared to consult with you and your principal deputies to develop a general outline of topics for NFIB consideration and specific items for each meeting. An NFIB agenda reflecting your guidance and interests will be more likely to stimulate a response from the Principals than an agenda consisting of staff-produced items for noting and approval. These need not occupy yours or the Board's valuable time. You should seek advice from NFIB as you have on production and the budget by focusing their attention on their national role.

3. (C) Recommendations: That you approve this concept and instruct the Executive Secretary to take the necessary steps to ensure that NFIB supports you in your direction of the national intelligence effort.

APPROVED:

*Yes - by all means -*  
Chairman, NFIB

  
Walter Elder

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DISAPPROVED:

Chairman, NFIB

DATE: 28 DEC 1977

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